

**What is claimed is:**

1. A network-based sales system comprising:  
a merchant computer sending an order of a  
product;

a defining unit; and

5 a distribution managing computer, wherein  
said defining unit defines a bar code of said  
product in response to said order, and notifies  
said distribution managing computer of said bar  
code, and wherein

10 said distribution managing computer manages  
distribution of said product based on said bar  
code.

2. A network-based sales system comprising:

a merchant computer sending an order of a  
product;

a defining unit; and

5 a production managing computer, wherein  
said defining unit defines a bar code of said  
product in response to said order, and notifies  
said production managing computer of said bar  
code, and wherein

10 said production managing computer manages  
production of said product based on said bar code.

3. The network-based sales system comprising:

a merchant computer sending an order of a product;

a defining unit; and

5 an EDP (Electronic Data Processing) system, wherein said defining unit defines a bar code of said product in response to said order, and notifies said EDP system of said bar code, and said EDP system manages stock of a merchant based  
10 on said bar code.

4. A network-based sales system comprising:

a merchant computer sending an order of a product;

a defining unit;

5 a formal product master database to which registered bar codes for formally-registered products are registered, wherein said defining unit accesses said formal product master database in response to said order to see if a product bar  
10 code for said product is registered as one of said registered bar codes, and defines said product bar code of said product to register said product bar code into said formal product master database as one of said registered bar codes when  
15 said product bar code for said product is not registered as one of said registered bar codes.

DRAFTS & PROOFS

5. The network-based sales system according to  
claim 4, further comprising a distribution  
managing computer, wherein said defining unit  
notifies said distribution managing computer of  
5 said product bar code, and said distribution  
managing computer manages distribution of said  
product based on said product bar code.

6. The network-based sales system according to  
claim 4, further comprising a production managing  
computer, wherein said defining unit notifies  
said production managing computer of said  
5 production bar code, and said production managing  
computer manages production of said product based  
on said product bar code.

7. The network-based sales system according to  
claim 4, further comprising an EDP system,  
wherein said defining notifies said EDP system of  
said product bar code, and said EDP system  
5 manages stock of a merchant based on said product  
bar code.

8. The network-based sales system according to  
claim 4, further comprising:  
a tentative product master database having  
tentative product data concerning tentatively-

DRAFTED  
SEARCHED  
INDEXED  
SERIALIZED  
FILED

5 registered products, wherein said defining unit  
extracts formal product data concerning said  
product from said tentative product master  
database to register said formal product data to  
said formal product master database when said  
10 product is registered as one of said tentatively-  
registered products.

DECODED EDITION

9. The network-based sales system according to  
claim 8, wherein said tentative product data  
comprises prices of said tentatively-registered  
products, and said formal product data comprises  
5 a price of said product.

10. The network-based sales system according to  
claim 8, further comprising a distribution  
managing computer, wherein said defining unit  
notifies said distribution managing computer of  
5 said product bar code and said formal product  
data, and said distribution managing computer  
manages distribution of said product based on  
said product bar code and said formal product  
data.

11. The network-based sales system according to  
claim 8, further comprising a production managing  
computer, wherein said defining unit notifies

5 said production managing computer of said  
and said production managing computer manages  
production of said product based on said product  
bar code and said formal product data.

12. The network-based sales system according to  
claim 8, further comprising an EDP system,  
wherein said defining notifies said EDP system of  
said product bar code and said formal product  
5 data, and said EDP system manages stock of a  
merchant based on said product bar code and said  
formal product data.

13. A network-based bar code defining system  
comprising:  
an order receiving unit receiving an order  
of a product through a computer network;  
5 a defining unit defining a bar code of said  
product in response to said order.

14. A network-based sales method comprising:  
sending an order of a product through a  
computer network;  
defining a bar code of said product in  
5 response to said order; and  
managing distribution of said product based

DRAFTED  
RECORDED  
SEARCHED  
INDEXED  
FILED

on said bar code.

15. A network-based sales method comprising:  
sending an order of a product through a  
computer network;  
defining a bar code of said product in  
5 response to said order; and  
managing production of said product based  
on said bar code.

16. A network-based sales method comprising:  
sending an order of a product through a  
computer network;  
defining a bar code of said product in  
5 response to said order; and  
managing stock of a merchant based on said  
bar code.

17. A network-based sales method comprising:  
providing a formal product master database  
to which registered bar codes for formally-  
registered products are registered;  
5 sending an order of a product;  
accessing said formal product master  
database in response to said order to see if a  
product bar code for said product is registered  
as one of said registered bar codes;

SEARCHED SERIALIZED INDEXED FILED

10 defining said product bar code of said  
product to register said product bar code into  
said formal product master database as one of  
said registered bar codes when said product bar  
code for said product is not registered as one of  
15 said registered bar codes.

18. A network-based method of defining a bar  
code of a product, comprising:

receiving an order of a product through a  
computer network;

5 defining a bar code of said product in  
response to said order.

SEARCHED  
INDEXED  
SERIALIZED  
FILED